

A
Sacramental Catechism

Designed for the use of

Poor Servants.

A N D

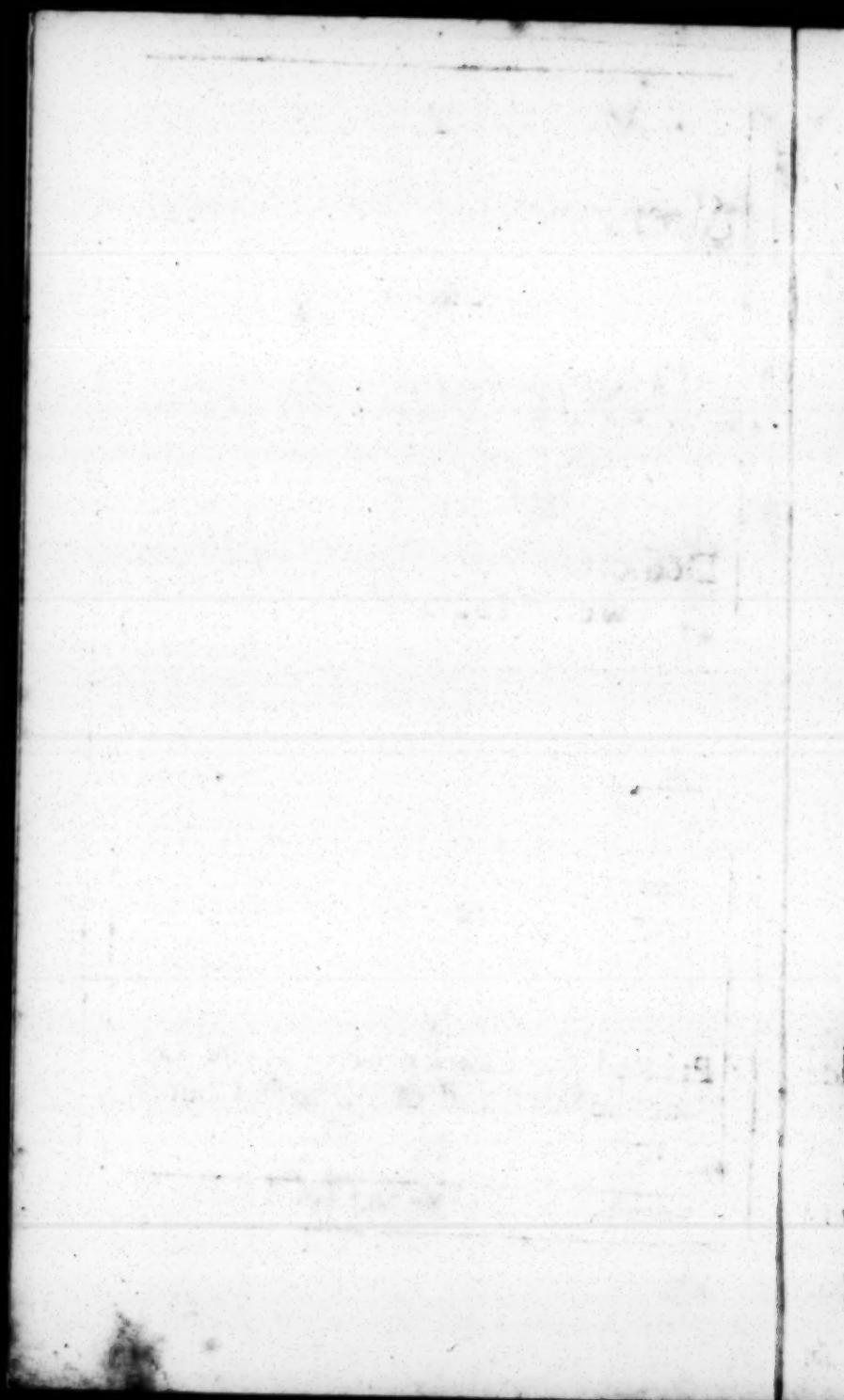
Dedicated to all *Charitable* and
well disposed *Christians*.

By R. W. A. B.

*And above all things have fervent Charity
among your selves : for Charity shall co-
ver the multitude of sin. 1 Pet. 4. 8.*

L O N D O N,
Printed for Charles Brune at the Gun
at the West end of St. Paul's Church.
1701.

Price two pence or 12 Shillings a hundred



A

CATECHISM E.

Short for Memory, and plain for Capacity, containing the grounds, and principles of the Christian Religion in general. Which every one should know, that desires to receive the Sacrament (of the *Lords Supper*) *worthily*, and to his Souls Comfort.

Question.

OF what Religion are you : 1 Pet. 3.
Acts 17.
26.
A. Of the *Christian Religion.*

Q. What Religion is that ?

A. That which teacheth a Man to look for Salvation only by *Jesus Christ* Acts 4.

Q. Where is this Religion taught you ?

A. In the Holy Scriptures which are the

Joh.n 5. the written word of *God*, and contain
39. all things needful for our salvation.

Q. What are the principal things, and those most necessary to Salvation, which are taught us in the Scriptures?

A. They are two : the one is what we are obliged to know, and the other is what we are bound to practice.

Q. What are we bound to know?

A. *God* and our selves.

Q. What must we know concerning *God*?

A. We must know three things : 1. that there is a *God*, 2. what a one this *God* is, and 3. what he hath done.

Q. How do you assure your self that there is a *God*?

A. 1. *Gods* word reveals it; 2. *Gods* works confirm it; and 3. mine own Conscience doth assure me of it.

Q. What a one is *God*?

A. *God* is a spirit most glorious in Nature, three in Persons, and one in Essence.

Q. What hath *God* done?

A. He hath decreed with himself from all Eternity how things shall be; he made all things in the beginning; and he hath ever since sustained them, and disposed of them.

Q. Thus much of that, which we are to know concerning *God*, tell me now what we are to know concerning our selves?

A. We

A. We are to know three things

1. What we were; 2. what we now are, *Gen. 5.*
and 3. what we shall be. *27.*

Q. What were we?

A. We were all in our first Creation Perfect and Happy.

Q. What are we now?

A. We are all by Nature sinful and miserable: but by grace in *Jesus Christ*, *1 Cor. 1*
as many as *God* doth call, are made righteous and happy. *2.*

Q. What shall we be?

A. Those amongst us that are good shall be everlastingly Blessed, and those that are wicked shall be for ever Cursed.

Q. And thus far touching our knowledge, tell me in the next place, what are we commanded and required to do, in this life?

A. We are commanded to live well or as the Apostle speaks, *Soberly, Righteously* and *Godly* in this present world.

Q. But what Rules and Example have we prescribed to us, for the Perfection of this important business?

A. Why we have *Gods Word*, the holy Gospel for our directions, and *Jesus Christ* for our Copy and Patern.

Q. But what doth *Gods word* require?

A. Piety towards our Omnipotent Creatour, Charity towards our Neighbours; Sobriety towards our selves; and mercy towards all other living Creatures.

Q. What doth the holy Gospel require?
A. True

The Communicants Guide.

A. True faith and unfeigned Repentance, as our only remedy for the breach of the Law.

Q. How are these graces to be begun, continued and perfected in us?

A. By Faith and fervent Prayer; by a due hearing and reading of the Word; and by worthy receiving of the Sacraments.

Q. How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in his Church thus to be received by us?

A. Two only Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Q. What is the use of the *Lords Supper*?

A. To be a sign a Seal, and pledge unto us, that *Christ Jesus* is given for us, and to us for the nourishing, and preserving of us unto eternal life.

John 13. 17. If ye know these things blessed are ye if ye do them.

A Prayer.

‘O Eternal and Everlasting *God* grant
 ‘that I may never be remiss in any one Du-
 ‘ty, and especially in my self examinati-
 ‘on, that I may not love my self overmuch
 ‘not encourage my self in any known and
 ‘willful Sin, so that I may incur thy
 ‘hatred and displeasure; But wash me I
 ‘beseech thee thoroughly from my sin, and
 ‘cleanse me from my secret faults, and lead
 ‘me into the way of everlasting through
 ‘*Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour*, Amen.
 The

The Communicants Guide, directing the younger sort which have never yet received, and the elder and ignorant sort, which have hither-to received unworthily, how they may receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper worthily and to their souls Comfort.

Q. **W**Hat must he do, that would receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper worthily, and to his souls Comfort?

A. He must do that, which is required of a worthy receiver before he cometh to receive; whilst he is receiving, and after he hath received.

Q. What is required of a worthy receiver; before he cometh to receive?

A. There is required a serious and solemn preparation of himself.

Q. Wherein doth that serious and solemn preparation of a mans self consist?

A. In Examination of himself, whether he have in him those things which ought to be in a worthy receiver.

Q. What are those things?

A. They are especially five. First Knowledge; Secondly Faith, Thirdly Repen-

tance; Fourthly Charity, and lastly an hungry and thirsting desire after *Christ*, and the benefits of his Death and Passion.

Q. What knowledge ought there to be in a worthy receiver?

A. There ought to be in him (besides a competent knowledge of the grounds and principles of the Christian Religion in general) a more particular knowledge both of himself, who is to receive, and of the Sacrament, which he is to receive.

Q. What must he know concerning himself, who is to receive?

A. He must know how miserable he is by Nature; and how much more miserable he hath made himself by his actual transgressions.

Q. What must he know concerning the true nature and use of the Sacrament which he is to receive?

A. He must know first who ordained it; Secondly for what ends it was ordained, and thirdly, what are the parts whereof it consisteth.

Q. Who ordained this Sacrament?

A. The *Lord Jesus Christ*, and that in the night when he was betrayed, and therefore it is called the *Lords Supper*.

Q. For what ends was it ordained?

A. It was ordained, first to keep in us a thankful remembrance of the Death and Passion of our *Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. Secondly to assure us of our particular part, and Interest in the bene-

benefits thereof ; and thirdly to be a bond and pledge, both of our union with *Christ*, and of our Communion one with another.

Q. What are the parts whereof this Sacrament consisteth?

A. They are three ; First the outward signs signifying ; Secondly the Divine word sanctifying ; and Thirdly the inward and spiritual grace signified.

Q. What are the outward signs signifying?

A. Bread and Wine, with the several actions pertaining to them, as Breaking, Giving, Taking, Eating and Drinking.

Q. What is the Divine word sanctifying?

A. The words of *Christ's* institution, pronounced with prayers and Blessings by a lawful minister.

Q. What are the inward and spiritual graces signified.

A. The Body of *Christ* Crucified, and his Blood shed for the remission of sins, exhibited by God to the Faith of the worthy receiver, which receives it, and feeds on it, for the nourishing of his soul unto life Everlasting.

Q. And thus far touching the knowledge which is required in the worthy receiver, tell me now what Faith is required in him?

A. There is required not only a bare knowledge and persuasion, that the body of *Christ* was crucified; and his blood shed for the remission of sins (for even this the
very

very Devils in Hell do believe, and yet tremble) but a particular application of the same, and all the benefits thereof unto a mans own soul, whereby he believeth that *Christs* Body was crucified, and his Blood shed for the remission of his sins in particular.

Q. And thus far also touching the faith which is required in a worthy receiver: tell me next what repentance is required in him.

A. There is required in him an hearty and unfeigned sorrow for all his sins past; and a full purpose with *Gods* Grace and assistance, never to offend God by the like for the time to come, but to amend his life, and to become a new man.

Q. And thus far also touching the repentance which is required in a worthy Receiver: tell me what charity is required in him?

A. There is required a care to be in Love and Charity withall men, striving to be reconciled to those whom he hath injured, and wronged; and being ready in his heart to forgive those who have injured and wronged him.

Q. Now prithee let me know in the last place what hungry and thirsting desire after *Christ*, and the benefits of his Death and Passion, are required in a Worthy Receiver.

A. There is required in him a sense and feeling of his want of *Christ*, and his righteousness

reousness, and of *Gods* wrath due unto him for his sins, which shewing him his woful and deplorable estate without CHRIST, may make him to hunger and thirst after him, and the benefits of his death and passion (the only means of pacifying *Gods* VVrath) as much as an 'hunger starved Man, and one that is ready to die for thirst after meat and drink.

Q. And thus you have shewed me what is the former of those two things which must be performed by a worthy receiver that would prepare himself aright before he cometh to receive, to wit, EXAMINATION tell me now which is the other of them?

A. It is *Prayer*: wherein if after the Examination he doth find in himself the former graces in any measure, he is to bless *God* for them, and to pray for the continuance and increase of them; and if he want them, or have them not in that measure, which *God* requireth in his word, he is to humble himself before the *Lord* in true contrition, and hearty sorrow for his failings confessing them unto him, and desiring pardon for *Christs* sake; and beg that his gracious spirit may help his infirmities in those graces he hath, and may work in him those which he wanteth, that so he may come as a worthy receiver to the holy table of the *Lord*.

Q. But what if a man be not thus prepared when he cometh to receive, is there any great danger in it?

A. Yes,

A. Yes, for first, he that is not thus prepared standeth guilty before *God*, of the Body and Bloud of the *Lord*.

Secondly instead of receiving that which might further his salvation, he shall eat and drink his own damnation: And lastly he shall not only be damned hereafter, but shall be severely punished also in this life, by sickness and weakness, yea, and at the end of his life by some fearful death.

Q. Now let me understand what is required of a worthy Receiver whilst he is receiving?

A. There is required a reverent gesture of Body; and a religious disposition of mind.

Q. What gesture of body is most requisite in the time of receiving?

A. There is no certain gesture prescribed in *Gods* word to be used in the receiving of the *Lords* Supper, and therefore that is fittest, which is most decent and orderly, and most agreeable to the discipline of the Church under which we live: So that it be not contrary to Piety or Charity, and if we be left to our own choice, then that gesture is to be judged best, which may best set forth the greatness of the giver, and the worth of the gift, and the Humility and thankfulness of the Receiver.

Q. What disposition of mind is required in a worthy receiver, at the time of his Receiving?

A. These

The Communicants Guide.

11

A. There is required, first, that his mind be taken of from all worldly and sinful thoughts, and secondly that it be wholly fraught with Heavenly Meditations and hearty Prayers, and Thanksgivings unto *Almighty God*.

Q. Whereon should a worthy receiver especially meditate in the time of Receiving?

A. He should especially meditate on the Death and Passion of *Christ Jesus his Saviour*; of the benefits which accrue to him thereby; and of the duties which he oweth to *God* and man therefore.

Q. How may he come best to meditate on the Death and passion of *Christ*?

A. By observing diligently, what is done by the Minister that doth administer it; and himself that doth receive it.

Q. What doth the minister do?

A. He doth consecrate, and set apart the Bread and Wine, whereby of common and ordinary Bread and Wine, it is made the Sacrament of the body and Blood of *Christ*. He doth also break the Bread, and pour out the Wine; and having so done doth deliver it to each of the Communicants.

Q. What is he to meditate on when he seeth the Minister to consecrate the Bread and Wine, by the words of *Christs* institution, and Prayer, and so Pronounces it to be the Sacrament of the blessed body and blood of *Christ*?

A. He

The Communicants Guide.

A. He is then to meditate how that God the Father out of his meer love to mankind, did set apart, seals, and appoint his only begotten Son to be the all sufficient means, and only Mediator to redeem us from sin, and to reconcile us to his grace and to bring us to glory.

Q. What is he to meditate on, when he seeth the Minister to break the Bread and pour out the Wine?

A. He is then to meditate that the Body of Christ was as truly crucified, and his blood shed for the remission of his sins under the sense of Gods wrath due unto them: as he doth now see the bread in the Sacrament broken and the wine poured out by the Minister.

Q. Lastly, what is he to meditate on when the minister cometh unto him, and delivereth him the bread and wine, thus Consecrated broken and poured out?

A. He is then to meditate, that as the Minister doth now offer and deliver into his hands the Bread and Wine, and bids him take it, eat and drink it; So doth Christ himself come unto him, and offer and give us his Faith, his very Body, and Blood, with all the benefits of his death and passion.

Q. Now sith you have informed me what the worthy receiver must meditate on in the time of receiving upon his sight of what the minister doth; tell me now in the next place what he must meditate on,

on, upon the sight, and sense of what he himself doth at that time?

A. When he hath received the bread and Wine at the ministers hand, and is eating of the one, and drinking of the other, he must then meditate and think with himself thus. As I have now taken, and do eat this bread and drink this wine for the nourishment of my Body, and life temporal; so I do believe that the Body and Blood of *Jesus Christ* being reverently taken by me, and applied by Faith unto my soul, shall nourish it up unto life Everlasting.

Q. And thus we have seen how the worthy Receiver is to meditate in the time of Receiving upon the Death and Passion of *Christ*, and the benefits which accrue to him thereby. Tell me now next what are the Duties, which he is to perform to God and man therefore?

A. To God he is to lift up his heart by way of Thanksgiving for the great work of our Redemption by the Death of *Christ*: and unto man he is to extend his love by cleaving to his fellow Communicants in one spirit, as unto members of the same body and by shewing mercy to the poor members of *Christs* body in contributing to their necessity according to his ability.

Q. And thus we have also seen what is to be done by the worthy Receiver at the time of Receiving. Tell me in the last place

place what is required of him after he hath received?

A. There is required EXAMINATION and RESOLUTION.

Q. Wherein stands the Examination which must be in a worthy Receiver, after he hath received?

A. It stands in this, to try whether he hath gotten any good by the Sacrament or not?

Q. What if he finds little or no good by his receiving?

A. He is then first to suspect himself, that some miscarriage hath been in him, either in his preparation to, or in his performance of the Duty; and having found out what was the fault in either, that hindered the efficacy of the Sacrament unto him, he must judge himself and be seriously humbled for it.

And secondly he must endeavour by after pains in Prayer, and humiliation to quicken, and awaken the efficacy of the Sacrament unto his soul.

Q. But what if he find any good by his receiving, what is he to do then?

A. He is first to bless GOD with all his heart therefore; and to acknowledge with all thankfulness GOD'S gracious dealing with him therein; and secondly he is to be careful, and watchful that he keeps up that holy and gracious frame of heart in himself which he hath brought with him from the Sacrament.

Q. And

Q. And thus have we seen, wherein the Examination of a worthy receiver consisteth after he hath received, tell me now wherein standeth his resolution?

A. It standeth in this, that he be careful and resolve to keep friendship with his *Maker*, and to express the power and efficacy of the Sacrament in making good, and keeping his Vows, and Covenants, which he made to and with God, of new obedience and amendment of life, when he came to receive.

Q. Is there any great danger if we neglect to do so?

A. Yes, for first without this care and Christian resolution we shall incur *Gods* heavy displeasure: Secondly we frustrate and make void, all that we have formerly done in, and at the Sacrament. And thirdly, we shall hereby bring our selves into a far worse condition, than we were before we came to receive.

Q. How may we come then by power to do this?

A. By watching carefully over our ways and courses; by examining them by the Rule of *Gods* word; and by hearty prayer unto *God* for his grace, to direct and assist us in all our ways.

Certain Excuses made, and pretended by Ignorant People for not receiving the holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper so often as they should, removed.

Many are the Excuses, which are made, and pretended by Ignorant People for not receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper so often as they should do, but the chiefest of them, and those that are most common in the mouths of the ignorant, are these that follow.

I. Excuse. *They have no leisure.*

Have they leisure to fill their bodies every day, and want they leisure to feed their souls? Our Saviour in John the 6.27. gives them better Council. Labour not (saith he) for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth to eternal life.

II. Excuse. *They want Cloaths.*

It is not outward apparel, but the inward ornaments that make us gracious in the sight of God. And therefore be our outward apparel never so mean, if we have on us the wedding garment of Faith, and be indued inwardly with humility, and adorned outwardly with Charity, God will bid us welcome to his Table.

III.

III. Excuse. *They are not in Charity.*

What is this but to excuse one sin with another? Their neglect or contempt of *Gods* Ordinance, by their uncharitable affection to their Brother, and that is so far from excusing them in the sight of God that it doth much aggravate their sin.

For why are they not in Charity? What is the cause of it? Is it not their own rankorous heart, their own malicious and revengeful will, and nothing else that keeps them from it? And because their neighbour hath wronged them, will they rather than they will forgive their Neighbours, wrong God, and their own souls?

IV. Excuse. *They are not prepared.*

Art thou prepared to pray, and art thou not prepared to receive the Communion? The same thing that make us unfit to receive the Communion, make us as unfit to pray: for except a man abandon the purpose of sin, and except he be in Charity *Mat. 6. 14.* he is no more fit to pray, than communicate, and therefore should abstain from the one, as well as from the other.

V. Excuse. *They use to Receive at EASTER every Year, and they hope that it is sufficient.*

This Communicating once a year at *EASTER*, was hatched in Popery, when ignorance prevailed in the Church: and is in no means to be followed of us, to whom God hath afforded better means of knowledge. And indeed it were a shame that Protestants in profession should be Papists in opinion.

But what is it that makes them put off their receiving to this time?

If it were their respect and reverence to the Sacrament, as fearing if they should receive it oftner, they should not come so well prepared to it as they hope to be then: that indeed were some (though a Poor) Excuse. But that is not it: it is rather, either because they place more holiness in that time above other, and so think the better day the better the Work, which is meer Popish superstition, or rather, because it is the Custom and Fashion so to do, which is profane irreligion.

Whereas good Christians look rather to Christ's Command, and their own necessity, than to any thing else, and because he commands it they would do it; and their own need and necessity of it makes them to do it, not once in a year, but as often as it may be done.

VI. Ex-

VI. Excuse. *They would come and receive but their ministers will not suffer them.*

If their ministers do hinder them without cause they shall bear their own condemnation : but if for want of knowledge, Charity or the like (which their profession or practice do witness) he do stay them from it, and be diligent and willing to warn them, and they continue still in their obstinacy, and wickedness, their blood shall be upon their own heads.

VII. Excuse. *They are conscious to themselves of some great, and crying sins which they have committed, and of which they have not yet sufficiently repented and therefore they will stay while the next opportunity of receiving, hoping by that time to have more fully repented of them, and to be better prepared.*

This Excuse indeed might be the more tolerable, if he that hath committed such sins were sure of these two things. First that he shall have longer time to repent in ; and secondly, that he shall have grace to repent, having had such a time. But of neither of these can any man be assured of. 'Tis true, God hath promised indeed to have mercy upon a sinner, at what time soever he shall truly repent and turn unto him ; but he hath no where promised to
give

20 *Excuses for not Receiving removed*

give him either time or grace to repent when he will. And therefore if thou art wise, or desirest to be wise for the Everlasting good of thy soul, dispeed thy repentance out of hand, and take the present opportunity that *God* offereth thee, as not knowing whether *God* will offer thee the like opportunity again: being also assured of this for thy *Comfort*, that *God* in all our graces, and so in repentance too, looketh not so much at the measure of them, as at their sincerity.

A Prayer.

‘O most *GRACIOUS GOD* I
 ‘most humbly beseech thee, that I may never make use of any frivolous excuses to
 ‘omit this important duty required of all
 ‘mankind. Grant that I may rather come
 ‘in rags than pass by such an heavenly
 ‘feast. And to fit and prepare me for the
 ‘participation of this Comfortable banquet, supply me with all suitable and effectual
 ‘graces and more particularly with
 ‘the graces of *Faith*, *Charity* and *Repentance*, so that I may come boldly to the
 ‘throne of grace, and be a worthy Communicant, both to my souls comfort and
 ‘thy everlasting glory, through *Jesus Christ*, to whom with the *Father* and
 ‘the *Holy Ghost* be all Honour, and Power
 ‘Majesty and Dominion from this time
 ‘forth for evermore. *Amen.*

A Short Exhortation.

21

A Short Exhortation.

Most dearly beloved in the Lord, the Reasons why so many men thus dis-regard the holy Sacrament are plainly evident, and have in as compleat and compendious a Treatise (as possible) been demonstrated to you, what remains now is only this, that first, if any Man expects to be saved he must necessarily frequent the *Lords Table*. Once in a year will never serve the turn, but as often as notice is given by the minister, he must prepare himself to be a Communicant, for otherwise it is a most notorious and crying sin, and what can more offend the Great God of Heaven and Earth, than to slight his holy institutions?

Therefore O Man, whosoever thou art turn not thy back upon this sacred ordinance, without a just and lawful cause, and there can be no just cause or lawful impediment, unless sickness. Neither Riches nor Poverty, or wordly business must keep thee from the Celebration of Christ's Nativity and Resurrection, and the sending of the Holy Ghost.

In a word, if thou art not fit to receive the Sacrament, thou canst not be fit to dye, nay nor live in my opinion. VVe know by the Martial law, all deserters of their colours are condemned to dye. Then I think if that be so great an offence, how much

much greater must that be to desert Christs word and Sacrament. If Souldiers are destroyed for the Violation of a Law which is established by an Earthly King : VVhat death can be bad enough for them who knowingly and willingly break Gods Laws, the Great King of Heaven? To conclude then with the words of the *Apostle*. *Be ye stedfast unmoveable always abounding in the workes of the Lord forasmuch as ye know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.* 1 Cor. 15 ult.

FINIS.

